



THE GODDESS KAMALAMBA IN THYAGARAJASWAMY TEMPLE

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ABSTRACT

Each temple, have a unique specialty and architecture.....

The article is about the ancient Goddess Kamalamba in Tiruvarur Thyagaraja temple. The ever seen Goddess Kamalamba who is seated in cross legged as a unique posture that never exists in any other Hindu temple. Mostly, we have seen the deities either in a standing or seated posture, but have you ever seen a deity seated in cross legged symbolizing virginal purity???? Such an iconographic representation is not seen anywhere else in India except in Tiruvarur Thyagarajaswamy Temple

KEYWORDS: God Thyagaraja, Kamalalayam, Kamalamba, Tiruvarur etc.

Goddess Kamalamba and Thyagaraja:

Tiruvarur Thyagarajaswamy Temple is one of the Saiva temple dedicated to the Lord Shiva, located in the town of Tiruvarur in Tamil Nadu, India. Shiva is worshipped as Moolanathar, and is represented by the lingam. This temple is also called as Paadal Petra Sthalam. It is a vital center of the Tantric Sri Chakra spiritual energy and the ancient practices established over millennia continue to be in active practice to this day. The antiquity of the temple predates the documented history that begins from the time of Mahendra Pallava. The province of Tiruvarur, prominent because of the energy of the Thyagarajaswamy temple, also included temples in Thiru Moolatannam and Araneriyam during this Pallava period. The preeminent deity here is God Thyagaraja, Vanmikanathar and Goddess Kamalamba, Alliyamkothai, Neelothpalamba.



She is the tantric focus of spiritual power. Her shrine faces north, the direction of Kailasam, symbolizing release from the cycle of birth and death. So Mother Kamalamba grants darshan to her devotees with her Crescent Moon jewel. She represents Mothers Saraswathi, Parvathi and Mahalakshmi holding a flower in the right hand, keeping the left on the hip and legs on a Yoga posture as a sovereign queen with pasam ankusham, rudraksha and lotus in her arms. Also within this temple there is another little temple called the Kamalamba Temple. This is considered one of the 64 Sakthi Peedam. She sits cross-legged in virginal purity contrasting the more earthy and sensual Bhoga Amman within the inner precincts. The Ambal sannidhi complex has a lot of mysticism built into it with the figures and construction all as per Srividya concept and it will not be explained by the priests to all. For example the Ganapathy in the main temple entrance is called Vallabha Ganapathy due to Vallabha on his left lap with the lord having 10 arms also. The Ambal sannidhi has an Uchishta Ganapathy with an asura neela on his lap (and his hands controlling this asura with many features who becomes a goddess as Ganapathy is with her, these are all part of the Srividya worship traditions hence a treat to the connoisseur. Muthuswami Dikshitar, one of the trinity of Carnatic music, who is a tantric initiate and a genius Sanskrit composer of inordinate logical methodology and incomparable creativity recalls Sri Vidya tantrism and powers of Kamalamba as the yogini Deity in his exquisitely rendered Kamalamba Navaratna Kritis. Thiru Moolatannam and Araneriyam during this Pallava period.

Dikshitar's creations at Tiruvavur included a set of sixteen kritis on the various attributes of Ganesh; a set of kritis on Thyagaraja and Nilothpalamba the presiding deities of Tiruvarur shrine; a set of Tiruvarur Panchalinga kritis; and eleven kritis of Kamalamba Navavarana group. The Kamalamba Navavarana kritis are works of musical and poetic excellence. They are adorned with sublime music, intellectual sophistication, soulful devotional lyrics and richly imaginative poetic imagery. Listening to the kritis is a truly rewarding experience, even if one is not aware of or ignores the underlying connotations of Sri Chakra and Sri Vidya tradition. But to analyze these kritis or compositions in depth, one needs a very strong knowledge on tantric aspects, Sanskrit language, and Carnatic music.

It is noteworthy that, Pradosha Pooja is performed in this temple every day – known as Nitya Pradosha – from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm though it is performed once in a fortnight in other temples. It is said that all the Devas – 33 crore in number (Muppathu Mukkodi in Tamil) are worshipping Lord Thyagaraja during this Pooja.

The annual chariot festival of the Thyagarajaswamy temple is celebrated during April – May, corresponding to the Tamil month of Chitrai. The chariot known as Aazhither is the largest of its kind in Asia and India weighing 300 tons with a height of 90 feet. The Azhi ther which is primarily a wooden structure with beautiful carvings gets added beauty when 68 decorative pieces are added to adorn the chariot. Normally, the dome of the cars will be in the format of hexagon, octagon, or circular. But the basement to the dome part of Azhi ther has five bands per side, totaling 20 in all. Valluvar Kottam in Chennai has been modelled on this chariot.

The Tiruvarur Goddess, Kamalamba, is the yogini. Kamala is a parody of penance, praying for union with Tyagesa. It is believed that this will happen only when the universe will come to an end and that will be augured by three events – a barren cow giving milk, a stone chariot in the temple courtyard moving by itself and the Kamalalaya Tank drying up. Fortunately, the tank has never gone dry!

**CONCLUSION:**

At least once in life, a visit to Tiruvarur Thyagarajaswamy temple should be made, as it is worth to see and blessed by the God Thyagaraja and Goddess Kamalamba. There are numerous shrines inside the temple each having its own antiquity and specialty. Indian mythology holds up a point that this Tiruvarur is the Centre of the Earth.

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